

9 MAY 1978

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OLC #78-0957/3

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Records Administration Branch
DDA/ISAS

FROM: William F. Donnelly
DO Records Management Officer

THROUGH: Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT: Retention of Field Contact Reports

REFERENCE: Senate Select Committee Recommendation 4

1. The SSCI Recommendation No. 4 states: "CIA should be required to retain for at least five years all records, including field contact reports (presently destroyed at the discretion of Chief of Station), relating to activity which requires approval of or review by the Special Coordination Committee of National Security Counsel."

2. Would you please ask OLC to inform the SSCI that by directive, field stations report all relevant operational information by cable, telepouch or dispatch? This includes information from contact reports, or the contact reports themselves. The information becomes the official record at Headquarters and is scheduled to be retained for a minimum of ten years before it may be destroyed. We would like OLC to suggest to the SSCI as well that these procedures appear to meet the SSCI recommendation for a minimum five-year retention of all records-worthy material.

3. OLC may also wish to point out by way of background that these procedures are intended to avoid duplication in the field of records available at Headquarters, and to avoid over-taxing the pouch system with redundant material such as informal contact reports whose substance has been included in official correspondence. It may be worth noting as well that any requirement to retain redundant or non-records material in the field can tie a station's hands in emergency destruction situations. Such crises afford little or no opportunity for a field station to devote time separating out material to be kept, and poses the

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risk of loss if the post is overrun - probably an unnecessary risk since the official station record can be re-constituted from Headquarters files.

[Redacted Signature]

William F. Donnelly

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CONCUR:

[Redacted Signature]

70/ Deputy Director for Operations

9/5/78
Date

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